

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT O&S COMMITTEE

1400 hours on 16th March 2017, Committee Room 2 – Actions

Present:

Councillor Zafar Iqbal (Chair)

Councillors David Barrie, Zaker Choudhry, Phil Davis, Diane Donaldson, Josh Jones, Ziaul Islam, John O’Shea, Eva Phillips, Timothy Huxtable, Sharon Thompson and Ken Wood.

Also Present:

Councillor Brett O’Reilly, Cabinet Member for Transport and Roads

Ian MacLeod, Assistant Director, Regeneration

Doug Lee, East Development Planning Manager

Baseema Begum, Research & Policy Officer, Scrutiny Office

Rose Kiely, Overview & Scrutiny Manager, Scrutiny Office

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING

The Chairman advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council’s Internet site (which could be accessed at “www.birminghamnewsroom.com”) and members of the press/public may record and take photographs.

The whole of the meeting would be filmed except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from for lateness from Councillors John O’Shea and Sharon Thompson.

3. ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT: ACTION NOTES 16TH FEBRUARY 2017/ISSUES ARISING

The Chair, Cllr Iqbal confirmed that:

1. In relation to outstanding actions relating to the Quarterly Key Performance Indicator Report on Skills:
 - Information relating to the Birmingham Jobs Fund in terms of where young people are living and where it is having the most impact as requested by Members at January's meeting would be circulated shortly.
2. Councillor Huxtable asked for further information on how the City Council is dealing with orphan lighting columns and non-BCC assets with respect to the Highways PFI contract. Cllr Huxtable had a meeting scheduled for 16th March.
3. Councillor Wood requested a member briefing on the Highways PFI contract. This has been scheduled for Thursday 6th April at 2pm in Committee Room 1.
4. Councillor O'Shea requested further information on the City Council's tree policy with respect to the pruning schedule. This will be picked up at the informal briefing.
5. B'ham Cycle Revolution - Councillor Islam asked what progress has been made on the £500k allocated for Top Cycle Locations. Cllr Islam should have received an email with that information.
6. Councillor Huxtable asked if the Committee could also receive further information on the West Midlands Connectivity Package as part of the HS2 Benefits Realisation item scheduled for April. Officers will liaise with officers due to present to Committee in April on this.

Cllrs Wood and Huxtable requested if it was possible for Amey representatives were able to attend future meetings with Members to answer queries on Highways issues.

4. CABINET MEMBER FOR JOBS AND SKILLS – ANNUAL REPORT

The Cabinet Member stated that his report was an update on the progress made on his three strategic priorities [closing the jobs gap, closing the skills gap and supporting inclusive growth] as set out to the Committee in October 2016 when he first attended.

He made reference to his report outlining in particular the work on:

- Closing the Jobs Gap – Focus on young people that are NEETs. Continues to be a focus and have had some significant successes in this area.
- Closer working with partners including the re-establishment of the B'ham Employment and Skills Board with key players from the local economy and private sector involvement. Next step is to set up a task & finish group to see how we move forward.
- Closing the Skills Gap – Lack of awareness is a barrier to citizens gaining. Making people aware and promotion of major projects is where the focus is being put in communities.
- The Combined Authority is leading on a kitemark on careers advice and guidance – working with providers.
- Youth Employment Initiative – budget spend is currently less than the allocated £50.4m – but the focus is on achieving outcomes efficiently. Target is crucial in getting 16,600 young people to be engaged in the project and into positive outcomes.

- Officers are looking how we can get more for our money with the Birmingham Jobs Fund.
- Apprenticeship Levy is a long needed and positive policy. Query on how it is used however there may be teething issues. We want to be trailblazers on this in the city. Looking to re-write the apprenticeship strategy for the City Council to include under-represented groups. A draft of this strategy will be circulated to Committee in due course for feedback. A City wide strategy on the apprenticeship levy is needed not just a City Council one.
- The Step Forward programme is set to be launched at the end of March. An invitation was made for members of the Committee to attend if they wish to.
- The work on the COG agenda is being re-focused and a re-launch will take place in due course. Would like it to be the number 1 jobs portal for young people in the future.
- The NEET figure for Birmingham is 2.7% against a target of 3%. Last year's figure was 3.2% so we are the joint best performing core city.
- Possible ESF fund for work with NEETs and over 30's to address the skills and jobs gap. Currently being worked on with Council Officers.

RESOLVED:-

That the report be noted.

5. EAST BIRMINGHAM AND NORTH SOLIHULL REGENERATION STRATEGY

Ian MacLeod outlined the key points from his report. During discussion with Members he highlighted that

- A range of key partners have been involved. A more robust and technical approach has been taken.
- The strategy covers the City Centre to Solihull.
- Reports have been made to the HS2 Delivery Board
- The strategy is at the initial stages of being developed. He will be attending Committee in the future to update on the next stage of development most likely to be in the Autumn.
- He will be taking all the points that members have raised around linking in with other strategies, connectivity issues and wider engagement once the strategy is in place. The next step will then to hold stakeholder/member workshops.

RESOLVED:-

That the report be noted.

6. WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2016-17

Cllr Huxtable requested that local BIDs and Sutton Town Council representatives are invited to the call-in meeting scheduled for Tuesday 21st March on Proposed Off-Street Parking Charges – Local Car Parks 2017/18.

RESOLVED:-

That the local BID and Sutton Town Council representatives are notified of the meeting on 21st March.

That the work programme be noted.

7. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS

None.

8. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Cllr Choudhry raised the issue of preventing damage to grass verges. The Chair outlined that as the matter was due to funding it was something that currently can only be resolved through the current funding available to Members through their wards/districts.

9. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

RESOLVED:-

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

Agreed.

The meeting ended at 15:51 hours.